

Appln No. 09/632,315
Amdt date March 23, 2004
Reply to Office action of October 21, 2003

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Previously Amended) A massaging apparatus comprising:

at least one guide rail affixed to a support structure, wherein the guide rail includes a generally v-shaped cross-section for receipt of at least one guide wheel;

each guide wheel including a generally diamond shaped cross-section adapted for rolling within the respective guide rail and being rotatably attached to a carriage assembly, wherein the carriage assembly is translationally coupled to each guide rail by the at least one guide wheel; and

the carriage assembly including a massage member and means for driving the at least one guide wheel, wherein the carriage assembly translates axially along the at least one guide rail and an annular groove is formed along the vertex of each guide wheel to accommodate an o-ring.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Original) The massage apparatus of claim 1, wherein the guide wheel is preferably double molded comprising a wheel interior molded from a substantially hardened plastic, and an exterior molded from a substantially malleable plastic.

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4. (Original) The massage apparatus of claim 3, wherein the wheel interior is molded from nylon, and the wheel exterior is molded from urethane.

5. (Currently Amended) A massaging apparatus comprising:
at least one guide rail affixed to a support structure, the guide rail including a first raceway having a generally V-shaped cross sectional shape and a second opposing raceway;

a carriage assembly including at least one rotatably attached guide wheel and at least one biasing member acting in opposition to the guide wheel, the guide wheel being adapted to travel within the first raceway, thereby coupling the carriage assembly to the guide rail, and the biasing member being adapted to bear against the second raceway, wherein force applied by the biasing member and the shape of the first raceway center the guide wheel within the first raceway;

the carriage assembly further including a massage member and means for driving the at least one guide wheel, wherein the carriage assembly translates axially along the at least one guide rail;

wherein the biasing member is spring loaded and self adjusting in such manner as to maintain the guide wheel within the first raceway, alleviating any slack caused by wear of the guide wheel.

6. (Canceled)

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7. (Original) The massage apparatus of claim 5, wherein the second raceway is spaced apart from the first raceway, parallel to the plane of movement of the carriage.

8. (Original) The massage apparatus of claim 5, wherein the guide wheel comprises a generally diamond shape cross-section for fitting within the first raceway.

9. (Original) The massage apparatus of claim 5, wherein the guide wheel is preferably double molded comprising a wheel interior molded from a substantially hardened plastic, and an exterior molded from a substantially malleable plastic.

10. (Original) The massage apparatus of claim 9, wherein the wheel is preferably double molded comprising an interior molded from nylon, and an exterior molded from urethane.

11. (Original) The massage apparatus of claim 5, wherein the biasing member is a biasing wheel comprising a first large diameter section and a second smaller diameter section, the second smaller diameter section extending concentrically from the first large diameter section.

12. (Original) The massage apparatus of claim 11, wherein an o-ring is fitted within an annular groove formed along the circumferential surface of the second section.

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13. (Original) The massage apparatus of claim 11, wherein the second diameter section is overmolded with a rubber or rubber-like material.

14-36. (Canceled)

37. (Currently Amended) A chair-type massaging apparatus comprising a massaging device disposed within a portion of the apparatus, the massaging device including:

at least one guide rail affixed to a support structure, the guide rail including a first raceway having a generally V-shaped cross section and a second opposing raceway spaced apart from the first raceway, parallel to the plane of movement of a carriage assembly;

the carriage assembly including at least one rotatably attached guide wheel and at least one biasing member acting in opposition to the guide wheel, the guide wheel being adapted to travel within the first raceway, thereby coupling the carriage assembly to the guide rail, and the biasing member being adapted to bear against the second raceway, wherein force applied by the biasing member and the shape of the first raceway center the guide wheel within the first raceway;

the carriage assembly further including a massage member and means for driving the guide wheels, wherein the carriage assembly translates axially along the guide rails;

wherein the biasing member is spring loaded in a direction away from the wheel, and wherein the bearing member is self adjusting and biased away from the wheel to maintain the

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carriage within the rail, alleviating any slack caused by wear to the wheel and biasing member.

38. (Previously Presented) The massage apparatus of claim 37, wherein the biasing member is a biasing wheel comprising a first large diameter section and a second smaller diameter section, the second smaller diameter section extending concentrically from the first large diameter section.

39-47. (Canceled)

48. (Currently Amended) A massaging apparatus comprising:
at least one guide rail affixed to a support structure, the guide rail including a raceway having a generally V-shaped cross section and a bearing surface;

a carriage assembly including at least one rotatably attached guide wheel and at least one biasing member acting in opposition to the guide wheel, the guide wheel being adapted to travel within the raceway, thereby coupling the carriage assembly to the guide rail, and the biasing member being adapted to bear against the bearing surface, wherein force applied by the biasing member and the V-shaped cross section of the raceway center the guide wheel within the raceway;

the carriage assembly further including a massage member and means for driving the guide wheels, wherein the carriage assembly translates axially along the guide rails;

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wherein the biasing member includes self adjusting means for maintaining the carriage within the rail, thereby alleviating slack caused by wear to the wheel.

49-55. (Canceled)

56. (New) The massage apparatus of claim 48, wherein the guide wheel comprises a generally diamond shape cross-section for fitting within the first raceway.

57. (New) The massage apparatus of claim 48, wherein the biasing member is a biasing wheel comprising a first large diameter section and a second smaller diameter section, the second smaller diameter section extending concentrically from the first large diameter section.

58. (New) The massage apparatus of claim 48, wherein an o-ring is fitted within an annular groove formed along the circumferential surface of the second section.

59. (New) The massage apparatus of claim 48, wherein the second diameter section is overmolded with a rubber or rubber-like material.

60. (New) The massage apparatus of claim 48, wherein the self adjusting means comprises a spring loaded for maintaining the guide wheel within the first raceway, thereby

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alleviating the effects of wear on the guide wheel and biasing member.